

REMARKS**I. Status Of The Claims**

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 11-15 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 11-13 and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's alleged admissions in view of JP 2000-176659 to Hideji ("Hideji"). Claims 4, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's alleged admissions in view of JP 2000-176659 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,614,338 to Pyburn et al. ("Pyburn"). Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's alleged admissions in view of Pyburn.

A. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 11-15, As Amended, Are Patentable Over Applicant's Alleged Admissions, Hideji and Pyburn

The Examiner has asserted that the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 5, 11, 12 and 14 is not patentable based on the Applicant's alleged admission that it was known to use ink or paint on vehicle lighting or signalling devices to form motifs or patterns in view of the method disclosed in Hideji for forming a pattern on a transparent material carried out by (1) bonding a metallic foil to the material using a hot-stamping method and (2) using laser radiation for evaporation scattering of the foil to form the pattern. The Examiner has further asserted that the subject matter of claims 4, 13 and 15 is not patentable because the color modification limitation recited in these claims is taught by Pyburn. Specifically, the Examiner has stated that the claimed step of exposing the component to laser radiation to modify the color of the material is taught by the method in Pyburn "of providing a graphic on a backlit component such as an illuminating display of an automobile where a molded plastic is exposed to laser energy to produce substantially opaque resins that form a graphic image."

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and respectfully submits that the pending claims, as amended, are patentable over the cited art. All of the pending claims have been amended to specify that the component material is translucent and that the color of the translucent material is modified when exposed to the laser radiation. None of the cited references, including Pyburn, discloses, teaches or suggests this aspect of the invention. Pyburn discloses the use of laser technology to form an opaque image (i.e., an image that blocks the passage of light) on the portion of the transparent material exposed to the laser radiation. Accordingly, Pyburn discloses the use of laser radiation to change the material from transparent to opaque. This is contrary to the invention recited in the pending claims.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's proposed combinations of Pyburn with Hideji and/or the Applicant's alleged admissions do not yield the invention recited in the pending claims. For example, combining the teachings of Pyburn with Hideji will result in a material having an opaque metal foil layer on a portion of the material not exposed to the laser radiation and an opaque image on the portion of the material that is exposed to the laser radiation. Accordingly, the Examiner's proposed combination of Pyburn and Hideji will result in a component material that is opaque over its entire surface. The portion of the image that is exposed to the laser radiation where the metal layer is removed will not be translucent as called for in the pending claims.

At least for these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application as presented is in condition for allowance. Entry of these amendments and favorable consideration are respectfully requested.

In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate the examination of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the number provided below.

AUTHORIZATION

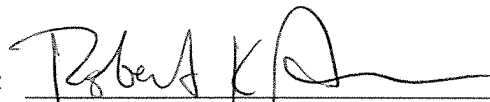
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1948-4825.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1948-4825.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: November 22, 2006

By:



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